## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EA-07 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /030 W

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R 221505Z DEC 76 FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8363 INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

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E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: EPPP, NI

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE NIGERIAN IMPORTS OF AUSTRALIAN BEEF

**REF: STATE 305399** 

- 1. EMBOFF DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION COMMERCIAL ATTACHE WALSH. WALSH ANTICIPATES THAT AUSTRALIAN BEEF EXPORTS TO NIGERIA MAY REACH 5,000 MT THIS YEAR. GIVEN THE EXPANDING MARKET AND INCREASING STORAGE CAPACITY, IMPORTS MAY GROW TO 10,000 MT OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS.
- 2.WALSH HAS HAD TALKS WITH NIGERIAN MEAT MARKETING BOARD (NMMB) WHICH HOPES TO DRAMATICALLY INCREASE BEEF IMPORTS. NONETHELESS HE BELIEVES ANY LARGE SCALE INCREASE OF BEEF IMPORTS IS NOT REPEAT NOT NOW FEASIBLE. WALSH SAYS NMMB'S PLANS ARE NOT BEYOND THE IN-HOUSE TALKING STAGE AND HEAVILY DISCOUNTS NMMB'S ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY TO ACHIEVE ITS GOAL.
- 3. IN SEPARATE MEETING WITH EMBOFFS, US BUSINESSMAN RICHARD MCLELLAN REPORTED EXPLORATORY DISCUSSIONS WITH NMMB CONCERNING SALE OF MEAT REFRIGERATION WAREHOUSES. MCLELLAN BROKE OFF TALKS BECAUSE HE THOUGHT NMMB WAS INCOMPETENT.

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4. COMMENT: EMBASSY CONCURS WITH WALSH AND MCLELLAN'S LOW ASSESSMENT OF NMMB. BELIEVE THAT GROWTH IN MEAT IMPORTS AND REFRIGERATED STORAGE CAPACITY WILL COME THROUGH EFFORTS OF NIGERIAN PRIVATE SECTOR AND NOT NMMB. SINCE PRIVATE SECTOR EXPANSION PLANS ARE MORE CONSERVATIVE AND SEEM MORE REALISITIC THAN THOSE OF THE NMMB, NOT LIKELY THAT IMPORTS

ON ORDER OF 10,000 MT PER MONTH WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE
FORESEEABLE FUTURE.
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## Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994 Channel Indicators: n/a

**Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED** Concepts: IMPORTS, MEATS, MEETINGS

Control Number: n/a Copy: SINGLE Draft Date: 22 DEC 1976 Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960 Decaption Note: Disposition Action: RELEASED

Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LAGOS14235

Document Number: 1976LAGOS14235 Document Source: CORE Document Unique ID: 00

Drafter: n/a Enclosure: n/a Executive Order: N/A Errors: N/A

Film Number: D760470-0307

From: LAGOS

Handling Restrictions: n/a

Image Path:

Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761221/aaaaarvd.tel

Line Count: 64

Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM Office: ACTION EB

Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a

Page Count: 2

Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a Reference: 76 STATE 305399
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ

Review Comment: n/a Review Content Flags: Review Date: 24 MAY 2004

**Review Event:** 

Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <23 SEP 2004 by SmithRJ>

**Review Markings:** 

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MÁY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:** Review Referrals: n/a Review Release Date: n/a Review Release Event: n/a **Review Transfer Date:** Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a

Secure: OPEN Status: NATIVE

Subject: POSSIBLE NIGERIAN IMPORTS OF AUSTRALIAN BEEF TAGS: EPAP, NI, AS To: STATE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006